

Effective: October 1, 2002 (Issued 5/02)	37.00 Winter Operations - Winter Weight Restrictions
Supersedes: Initial Issue	37.15 Posted Roads

By: Director, Bureau of Highway Operations	Page 1 of 2
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A. Authority

The department may impose special seasonal weight restrictions on any state trunk highway that, because of weakness of the roadbed due to deteriorating or climatic conditions or other special or temporary conditions, would likely be seriously damaged or destroyed in the absence of such special limitations. This is done in accordance with Wis. Stats. Section 349.16.

Seasonal weight restrictions usually apply only during those times when the roadbed is becoming unfrozen. The posted limits normally are six tons gross load for single-axle vehicles and ten tons for tandem-axle vehicles. All annual or single-trip overweight travel is not permitted during this time on posted road sections, in accordance with Wis. Stats. Section 348.17.

The department may exempt vehicles carrying certain commodities. Vehicles carrying these commodities, specified by the department or used to perform certain services specified by the department such as pumping septic or holding tanks, may be exempted from the special seasonal weight limitations stated or may be subject to different weight limitations if such exemption or limitation is reasonable and necessary to promote the public health, safety and welfare according to Wis. Stats. Section 349.16 (3).

B. Imposition of Special Weight Limitations

Signs shall be erected on or along the highway section on which special weight limitations are imposed. Reasonable notice that a special weight limitation is in effect and the nature of that limitation shall be given at both ends of the highway section. The limits of posted highway sections should be chosen so as to allow vehicles to choose an alternate route without having to perform a u-turn. All signs and their installation should be in accordance with the rules of the department and should be standard with other weight-limitation signage.

C. Procedure

1. Prior to the start of the spring thaw period, approximately by March 1st of each year, the District Chief Systems Operations Managers shall notify by written list the bureau of highway operations of the highway sections within their respective districts that will be posted for special weight restrictions during the roadbed thawing period.

The list and map shall include the state highway number, the limits of the affected highway section, the effective date and, when appropriate, the removal date. The bureau of highway operations office will compile a list of all highway sections with special weight restrictions and distribute copies to the Division of Motor Vehicle - Permits Unit and other interested parties and post notice of the posted road sections at the department's Internet web site:

(http://www.dot.state.wi.us/dtid/bho/weight_rest_prog.html).

The bureau of highway operations based on written reports submitted by District Chief Systems Operations Managers will update the list and map as necessary.

2. The lifting of posted road restrictions in late April to early May, depending on roadway temperature and road conditions, will be publicized by notice at the department's Internet web site.